
NEWS RELEASE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

State invests additional \$40 million to finalize environmental impact report for Last Chance Grade

Sacramento, CA – The State of California is making a massive investment in Highway 101 and the Last Chance Grade. Senator Mike McGuire, Assemblymember Jim Wood and Congressman Jared Huffman, in partnership with Caltrans and the California Transportation Commission (CTC), announced that \$40 million in funding to complete the environmental review of the Last Chance Grade Project was approved by a vote of the CTC today. The funding will allow Caltrans to evaluate each of the potential routes and ultimately decide on a preferred route alternative. This project will make Highway 101’s Last Chance Grade a reliable route for North Coast communities for generations to come, and today’s allocation brings the total new state investment for a permanent fix to Last Chance Grade to \$50 million.

“We all made a commitment four years ago to get the job done with the Last Chance Grade and today’s vote moves the project forward, more than ever before in history,” Senator Mike McGuire said. **“We have been grateful to partner with Assemblymember Wood, Congressman Huffman, the Del Norte Board of Supervisors, Crescent City Council, the California Transportation Commission and Caltrans on this critical project. This is a true testament of what can be accomplished when we all work together for the North Coast.”**

“The Last Chance Grade is a critical transportation route for our North Coast and a project this massive, that will serve this community for decades, requires thoughtful and extensive planning,” said Assemblymember Jim Wood (D-Santa Rosa). **“The funding approved today moves this critical project along and ultimately will protect \$1.5 billion in economic activity the region depends on.”**

“California Transportation Commission’s decision to provide an additional \$40 million in support of Last Chance Grade is big news for the safety of both the Del Norte community and the travelling public, as well as for the North Coast’s economy,” said Rep. Huffman. **“This funding will be instrumental in helping to find a new, durable route at Last Chance Grade, which will reflect both safety and environmental concerns. After working with Senator McGuire and Assemblymember Wood, my Last Chance Grade Stakeholder Group, and requesting this financial support, I’m glad to see how momentum on the project has ramped up over the past few years and that we are taking major steps towards a permanent solution.”**

\$10 million in geotechnical work is currently underway, and this influx of new funding will allow the project to continue and complete the environmental process. This will include conducting studies related to environmental, biological, and cultural resources in addition to traffic impacts.

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“Highway 101 is a vital transportation corridor for residents, visitors and freight in Northern California,” said Caltrans Director Laurie Berman. “This funding will help ensure this remains a reliable corridor for future generations.”

Caltrans maintenance crews monitor the area closely and have responded quickly to repair needs when necessary, promptly closed lanes to complete more extensive repairs. \$55 million has been spent on temporary fixes to protect the highway. The funding approved today will allow for another big step to be taken in saving tax payer dollars and providing more reliable infrastructure.

“Last Chance Grade is a critical transportation/mobility corridor connecting North Coast communities,” said California Transportation Commission Chair Fran Inman. “The Commission expects today’s allocation for engineering analyses and environmental studies will lead to a permanent solution that keeps the region safe and its economy strong.”

The CTC officially voted to allocate \$45 million today for the Last Chance Grade project. \$5 million of the \$45 million was previously programmed but had yet to be allocated for the geotechnical studies. This milestone is the result of many stakeholders working together to complete this critical project that will help prevent a complete failure of Last Chance Grade and avoid an annual loss of \$1.5 billion in lost economic activity in the region.

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